

Equity Statement for SR22-10, On the Timely Settlement of the Washington Teachers' Union (WTU) Contract Negotiations

D.C. teachers have not had a renewed contract in over three years, leaving them without a salary raise adjusted for inflation or unexpected costs during the pandemic. Given the District's extremely high cost of living, static wages hurt all teachers, but inordinately impact those with families, single parents (predominantly mothers), and those who are primary breadwinners for their families.

 Further, educator testimony and advocacy have made it clear that the continued lack of a contract has further exacerbated already low morale, which has been associated with an increase in teacher attrition. While teacher turnover negatively impacts students Districtwide, SBOE research has shown that schools serving higher numbers of students of color, low-income students and students designated At-risk have significantly higher rates of churn. In other words, students who most need stability are least likely to experience it in their schools where teacher turnover is 33% compared to 25% citywide. Providing teachers with a fair contract is an important step toward improving professional morale and, with it, teacher retention.

Educator testimony has also revealed that a new contract is needed to ensure teachers have adequate time to plan and to attend to students' non-academic needs. These basic conditions are important to creating a positive learning environment for all students and are absolutely essential for students most impacted by inequities and learning difficulties that have been compounded by the pandemic.



